REPORT

Of the Committee on Pensions and Revolutionary Claims on the Petition of Elizabeth Hamilton.

FEBRUARY 24, 1816.

Read and ordered to be printed.

The committee on pensions and revolutionary claims, to whom was referred the petition of Elizabeth Hamilton, respectfully

REPORT....

That it is stated by the petitioner, that her late husband Alexander Hamilton was, as she is advised, justly entitled to five years' full pay (as commutation of half pay during life) of a lieutenant colonel—in which capacity he served in the regular army of the United States during the revolutionary war.

That, her husband never received the said pay, to which he was so entitled—that if he ever relinquished his claim to said pay, of which an apprehension is expressed by the petitioner, it was from the delicate motive of devesting himself of all interest upon the subject of making provision for the disbanded officers of the revolutionary army, who served during the war; in which important business he was called on to act, as a member of Congress, in the year 1782: and that the present situation of the family of her lamented husband, renders it desirable that they should receive the remuneration to which he was justly entitled from

his country. This remuneration, therefore, the petitioner respectfully solicits.

The committee are not aware of any public record or document, showing the time at which colonel Hamilton resigned his commission in the army. From the uniform tenor of various letters of distinguished officers of the revolutionary army, addressed to the honourable Richard M. Johnson, as chairman of the committee of claims, in the year 1810, as well as from a brevet commission, dated the 28th day of October, 1783, by which lieutenant colonel Alexander Hamilton was promoted to the rank of colonel by brevet, in the army of the United States; the committee entertain the opinion that colonel Hamilton served during the war: and that he never received either half pay during life, or full pay for five years in lieu thereof as commutation, to which he was entitled by law.

Of any relinquishment of colonel Hamilton to the claim now asked to be satisfied, the committee possess no knowledge; except that derived from the apprehension expressed in the petition, to which they have already adverted; and from a written document signed A. H. importing to be a statement of the temporal concerns of colonel Hamilton, in which allusion is made to a note by him signed, addressed to the secretary of war, relinquishing the claim in question. The committee would further remark, that should a probability exist that colonel Hamilton may have relinquished his said claim, and notwithstanding it is barred by the statute of limitation, nevertheless, as the services have been rendered to the country, by which its happiness and prosperity have been promoted, they are of opinion, that to reject the claim under the peculiar circumstances by which it is cha-

racterized, would not comport with that honourable sense of justice and magnanimous policy, which ought ever to distinguish the legislative proceedings of a virtuous and enlightened nation.

They have therefore prepared a bill, granting the relief solicited in the premises.